

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

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INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

USMISSION BERLIN

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY PRAGUE

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY SOFIA

USMISSION USNATO

AMEMBASSY WARSAW

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BUCHAREST 1407

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, RO

SUBJECT: ECHOES AND REACTIONS ON ROMANIAN LEADERSHIP
CHANGES

REF: (A) BUCHAREST 1186 AND (B) 1233

1. SUMMARY. AS DUST RAISED BY LEADERSHIP CHANGES OF LATE
MARCH GRADUALLY SETTLES, CERTAIN FEATURES OF SHIFTS ARE
BECOMING MORE CLEAR WHILE OTHERS REMAIN MURKY. THIS
TELEGRAM IS INTENDED AS FOLLOW-UP COMPENDIUM OF INFORMATION,
NOT AS BASIC ANALYSIS, AND COVERS FOUR POINTS: (A) ADDI-
TIONAL REPORTS AND RUMORS AS TO HOW LEADERSHIP IS TO BE
AFFECTED, INCLUDING STILL UNCLEAR FEATURES OF NEW PERMANENT
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BUREAU; (B) ANALYTICAL CONSENSUS OF DIPLOMATIC CORPS; (C)

MEDIA FOLLOW-UP; AND (D) PUBLIC REACTION. IT IS INTENDED
PRIMARILY FOR SPECIALISTS. END SUMMARY.

2. LEADERSHIP RUMORS: NATURE AND COMPOSITION OF PERMANENT BUREAU IS STILL UNCLEAR BUT SOME ADDITIONAL STRANDS OF REPORT AND RUMOR ARE CIRCULATING. OF MEMBERS FROM COUNCIL OF MINISTERS, SEVERAL SOURCES SAY THAT POST OF FIRST VICE PRESIDENT FORMERLY FILLED BY VERDET WILL REMAIN VACANT FOR PRESENT, PERHAPS UNTIL PARTY CONGRESS THIS FALL. OF OTHER VICE-PRESIDENTS OR DEPUTY PRIME MINISTERS, WE REPORTED EARLIER RUMORS THAT THE TWO WHO WOULD BE IN PERMANENT BUREAU OF PARTY WOULD BE RADULESCU AND OPREA (REF A). THIS RUMOR STILL CIRCULATES ALONGSIDE ANOTHER THAT THE TWO CHOSEN ONES WILL BE RADULESCU AND DRAGANESCU. ALL INFORMANTS SEEM UNANIMOUS THAT PAUL NICULESCU-MIZIL WILL NOT BE IN THE PERMANENT BUREAU AND SEVERAL RUMORS ARE AFLOAT THAT HE MAY BE OUSTED FROM MINISTER OF EDUCATION TO ANOTHER JOB (ONE VERSION IS TO NATIONAL UNITY FRONT). CURRENT PRESIDENT OF ACADEMY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES HIHNEA GHEORGHU WILL ENTER MINISTRY OF EDUCATION SHORTLY AS MINISTER OF STATE AND POSSIBLY WILL EVENTUALLY REPLACE MIZIL AS HEAD OF MINISTRY LATER. FACT OF HIS ENTERING MINISTRY COMES DIRECTLY FROM MIHNEA GHEORGHU'S WIFE TO EMBOFF.

3. THERE IS ALSO NOW SOME QUESTION WHETHER ALL OF PARTY SECRETARIES WILL BE MEMBERS OF PERMANENT BUREAU AS ORIGINAL ANNOUNCEMENT IMPLIES BUT DOES NOT SPECIFICALLY STATE THROUGH USE OF PLURAL. POLISH COUNSELLOR SAYS HE WAS TOLD BY PARTY SOURCE THAT NOT ALL SECRETARIES WOULD REMEMBER. NUMBER OF SECRETARIES IS INCREASED, AT LEAST FOR MOMENT, BY ONE SINCE MIRON CONSTANTINESCU REMAINS IN SECRETARIAT DESPITE LOSS OF ECONOMIC FUNCTIONS TO VERDET (HE NOW HAS NATIONALITIES AND SUPERVISION OF ROMANIAN ACADEMY). SOURCES STILL UNCLEAR ON WHEN BUREAU WILL BEGIN TO OPERATE; MANY DOUBT ITS FORMAL DEBUT UNTIL PARTY CONGRESS.

4. DIPLOMATIC CORPS VIEWS: ON THE WHOLE, LOCAL DIP CORPS ANALYSIS OF LEADERSHIP CHANGES ACCORDS WITH OUR OWN (REFTELS). THERE IS WIDESPREAD AGREEMENT, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT MAURER'S REMOVAL WAS TO SOME EXTENT BECAUSE OF HIS POLITICAL DIS-CONFIDENTIAL

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AGREEMENTS WITH CEAUSESCU, AS WELL AS FOR THE OBVIOUS REASONS OF AGE AND HEALTH. MOREOVER, WHILE TROFIN'S DEMOTION CONFIRMED WIDELY-HELD VIEWS ABOUT STATE OF HIS POLITICAL FORTUNES, MANY SEE NICULESCU-MIZIL AS ANOTHER LOSER. OPINION IS WIDELY HELD WITHIN THE DIP CORPS THAT FURTHER PERSONNEL CHANGES ARE TO BE EXPECTED, PARTICULARLY IN THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE.

5. LOCAL MEDIA FOLLOW-UP: WE WOULD BE EXPECTED, THE ROMANIAN MEDIA'S EXTREMELY HEAVY PLAY GIVEN TO RECENT CHANGES HAS CONCENTRATED ON CEAUSESCU HIMSELF AND THE IMPORTANCE OF HIS NEW POSITION. SO FAR (APRIL 8) OVER 50 CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES FROM CHIEFS OF STATE HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED IN SCINTEIA (PRESIDENT NIXON'S MESSAGE RECEIVED APRIL 6 WAS PRINTED AT HEAD OF LIST ON APRIL 7). IN ADDITION, THERE HAS BEEN AN EFFUSION OF LAUDATORY POETRY AND PROSE ABOUT CEAUSESCU, NATIONALISTIC IN FLAVOR AND COMPARING HIM WITH MICHAEL THE BRAVE AND OTHER GREATS FROM ROMANIA'S PAST. A PARTICULARLY CLOYING EXAMPLE OF THIS WAS THE EXTRAORDINARY PUBLISHING (SCINTEIA, APRIL 4), APPARENTLY IN ALL SERIOUSNESS, OF CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE FROM SALVADOR DALI PRAISING CEAUSESCU'S "ESTABLISHMENT OF THE PRESIDENTIAL SCEPTER."

6. PUBLIC REACTION: WHILE OVERALL REACTION OF ROMANIAN PUBLIC TO CEAUSESCU'S ELEVATION IS DIFFICULT TO GAUGE, EMASSY CONTACTS ON WHOLE APPEAR TO VIEW IT WITH FEELINGS RANGING FROM INDIFFERENCE TO EMBARRASSMENT AND ALARM. SOME SEE IT AS A FORMALITY. MAURER HAS BEEN WIDELY-RESPECTED FIGURE AMONG WIDE SECTOR OF POPULATION AND HIS DEPARTURE IS VIEWED BY MOST ROMANIANS WITH SORROW, PARTICULARLY BY THOSE WHO BELIEVE HE EXERTED MODERATING INFLUENCE IN GOVERNMENT THAT WILL NOT BE CONTINUED BY HIS SUCCESSOR. IN GENERAL, THERE APPEARS TO BE SENSE OF UNEASINESS THAT STRENGTHENING OF CEAUSESCU'S POSITION WILL HELP MAINTAIN RATHER THAN MODERATE PROGRAM OF FORCED INDUSTRIALIZATION AT EXPENSE OF CONSUMER. HOWEVER, A FEW ROMANIANS TAKE PERVERSE SATISFACTION THAT LATEST CHANGES FURTHER DISTINGUISH GOR FROM USUAL STRUCTURE OF WARSAW PACT STATES AND RECALL FROM ROMANIA'S HISTORY THAT THE STRONGER HER LEADERS HAVE BEEN, THE LESS FOREIGN STATES HAVE BEEN ABLE TO MEDDLE WITH HER.

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